

Kaiydn Isabella Roache-Brooks
Maine Youth Justice

Representative Warren, Senator Deschambault and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, my name is Kaiydn Isabella Roache-Brooks.

I want to start my testimony by saying that myself and my family are rebuilding from my incarceration in Long Creek in 2012. I am a non-binary trans person in Maine. It has been almost a decade since I've been trying to move on from that traumatizing experience in my life but it never leaves. I'm here to testify in support of LD 1668 and the closure of Long Creek.

When I was released, I had to re-learn how to survive in society. I was taught to be scared of people, how to watch over my shoulder. What do you expect to happen when you lock up youth who have already experienced trauma and now are going to experience more? One of the most challenging parts of my incarceration was watching the impacts on my mom. There was nothing she could do to support.

Long Creek doesn't teach you about why you end up there and how to avoid being in the adult system. When I heard Governor Mills call Long Creek a school environment last year, I felt disrespected and angry. Long Creek impacts my life on a daily basis. I am relearning how to connect with people, how to trust people, and be myself. There is no supports, only punishment and punishment CAN BE A DEATH SENTENCE. It has almost killed me several times.

I don't want to have to fight for this. This should be an easy vote to support LD 1668.